



Making a difference...together

Minutes of a Meeting of the Regional Housing Advisory Committee

April 7, 2022, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, Virtual Meeting (Microsoft Teams)

PRESENT: Don McTavish, Alita Tocher, Luke Mari, Bill Brown, Lindsay Chase, Nadine Kawata, Kathy Whitcher, Kirsten Baillie

GUESTS: Pershing Sun (CMHC), Hemesh Parbhu (CMHC)

STAFF: Melanie Hope, Emily Sinclair, Maia Kerr (recorder)

REGRETS: Danella Parks, Andrea Hudson, Brian Green, David Corey, Kerriann Coady, Danielle Deni

Meeting called to order at 2:03 pm.

1. Territorial acknowledgement

Chair Nadine Kawata offered a territorial acknowledgement of the Indigenous communities in the Capital Region.

2. Welcome and approval of Agenda

Chair Nadine Kawata welcomed all RHAC members. Upon review, no agenda items were added.

MOVED by Bill Brown, **SECONDED** by Lindsay Chase.

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Approval of December 16, 2021 Minutes

MOVED by Lindsay Chase, **SECONDED** by Don McTavish.

That the minutes from the December 16, 2021 RHAC meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair

Melanie Hope called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Regional Housing Advisory Committee (RHAC) for 2022.

Luke Mari was nominated and the nomination was declined.

Melanie Hope called a second time for nominations for the position of Chair of the RHAC for 2022.

Nadine Kawata was nominated and the nomination was accepted.

Nominations were called for a third time and as there were none, nominations were closed. Nadine Kawata was acclaimed as Chair of the RHAC for 2022.

Nadine Kawata assumed the Chair and called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the RHAC for 2022.

Kathy Whitcher was nominated and the nomination was accepted.

Nominations were called for a second and third time and as there were none, nominations were closed. Kathy Whitcher was acclaimed as Vice-Chair of the RHAC for 2022.

5. Business Arising

- CRD staff followed up with members whose appointments were due to expire at the end of the year regarding term extension to December 31, 2023.
- CRD staff circulated Non-Disclosure Agreements for signature. Outstanding members to be contacted directly by Maia Kerr.
- Melanie Hope met with Caitlyn Vernon, Manager, CRD First Nations Relations to discuss CRD remuneration policy and increasing Indigenous representation on the RHAC:
 - The CRD Board has amended its bylaws to create spaces for each Nation to appoint an elected representatives to sit as a First Nation Member on CRD standing committees. The CRD remuneration policy offers \$110 per committee meeting attended, including expenses. This applies to CRD standing committees, but does not apply to advisory committees at this time. The CRD also has an honoraria policy and guidelines to offer an honourarium for cultural events and knowledge sharing.
 - Caitlyn Vernon recommended first ascertaining if Indigenous peoples want to be involved in RHAC and clearly identifying how their participation could be of reciprocal benefit.
 - Suggestion was made for RHAC to consider a recommendation to the CRD Board to expand remuneration to advisory committees to address the issue of access equity.
 - As a next step, CRD to investigate interest from Indigenous community partners in participating in a RHAC meeting.

6. Regional Housing Affordability Strategy Annual Report Update

- The Regional Housing Affordability Strategy (RHAS) Annual Report, which reports out on the five performance measures identified in the 2018 RHAS, was updated with newer data and presented to the CRD Board March 9, 2022.
- Discussion ensued about the need to stem sprawl and development happening outside of transit investment:
 - Emily Sinclair, Senior Manager, CRD Regional and Strategic Planning agreed that within our growth boundary, the region is not performing as strongly as it could be and noted that this has been flagged for board. While the current regional growth strategy doesn't address this, the CRD is open to feedback.
 - It was noted that this issue may affect some municipalities more than others.
 - In light of climate change data, transit is an important issue; one member asked whether RHAC could put a letter together encouraging more compact development?
- RHAC members requested less aggregated data to help craft policy.
- CRD staff to add to next RHAC agenda.

Pershing Sun and Hemesh Parbhu joined meeting at 2:25 pm.

MOVED by Luke Mari, **SECONDED** by Bill Brown.

That the RHAC write a letter to DPAC requesting more detailed spatial data (graphic) for committees' review.

CARRIED

7. Presentation and Discussion Topics

- **2021 CMHC Rental Market Report Update:** Pershing Sun, CMHC Senior Analyst, Economics, Market Insights West presented on this annual report which was released February 2022
 - CMHC currently seeking to fill data gap caused by rental basement/garden suites
 - Patterns of demand and supply vary greatly in different regions of CRD

- In 2021 more Canadians moved to BC than any other province (almost replaced 2021 decline in international migration)
- Higher migration to BC increased rental demand in 2021
- CRD job market mostly recovered with unemployment levels nearing pre-pandemic levels
- 2021 rental market survey results for Victoria CMA:
 - Vacancy rates (1%) were lower and rent rate increases (3.1%) were higher than those in Vancouver (increased rental rates due to turnover).
 - Westshore had sharpest vacancy decline and highest average rent in Victoria CMA.
 - Saanich rental rates doubled last year (Zone 5).
 - Most purpose-built rentals are studio/one bedroom; only 3% are 3+ bedrooms.
 - Due to demolition of old units to build new, only a portion of new rentals represent net new stock. Overall increase of 600 units in 2021 (half that seen in 2020). Change of supply varies between municipalities.
 - Rental supply falling behind projected population growth, but 30% more projects under construction in 2022 than 2021.
 - Renters facing significant rent increase when looking to move to a new unit.
 - Renters that moved away as a result of the pandemic are now moving back and paying a higher rental rate.
 - Rental that is affordable to low-income households have lowest vacancy rate and lower rent units are more likely to have rent arrears.
 - CMHC noted that most of this data can be accessed at cmhc.ca/hmiportal

Lindsay Chase and Alita Tocher left the meeting at 3:12 pm. (Quorum lost)

- Discussion and questions ensued:
 - CMHC to confirm whether Saanich data could be separated into rural and urban.
 - CMHC to confirm secondary rental market sample size for 2021.
 - CMHC to confirm what percentage of income quintiles (Slide 15) are spending more than 30% of their income on rent (in order to see how core housing affordability ties into rental arrears by looking at percent of household income spent on housing).
 - CMHC to explore suggestion that Slide 13 data be shown as percent of housing stock/increasing housing stock (rather than as actual numbers) and suggestion to split Langford, View Royal, Colwood, and Sooke into separate areas.

Kathy Whitcher left the meeting at 3:20 pm.

- **RHFP 2.0: Future Housing Priorities and Partnerships:** Melanie Hope presented on this upcoming CRD report
 - Discussion ensued about directions the new program could take:
 - Increasing percent of shelter rate units required
 - Targeting unit size to address Indigenous peoples' and women/children's needs (e.g. shelter and three bedroom units)
 - Anticipating geographic needs of region and look at where supply may be needed
 - Considering pre-development funding
 - Linking transit investment to some of the profitability that comes with land acquisition (to ensure transit and housing work together proactively) - Emily Sinclair and Kirsten Baillie to discuss further offline
 - CRD to share report with RHAC by email and request feedback

Luke Mari left the meeting at 3:30 pm.

8. Review of mandate and issue topics for future meetings

- CRD to organize follow-up with Chair/Vice Chair and solicit ideas from RHAC members.
- CRD to look into inviting guests to create opportunities for shared learning and partnerships to better address the housing needs of Indigenous people in the capital region.

Kirsten Baillie left the meeting at 3:54 pm.

9. Roundtable

- Bill Brown: Esquimalt about to do first housing agreement with CRD (to follow-up with Melanie Hope)
- Nadine Kawata: New Saanich Housing Policy and Program Manager Pam Hartling has started

10. Adjournment

MOVED by Bill Brown, **SECONDED** by Don McTavish.

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 pm.